



MONTANA SYNOD

2415 13th Ave. So.
Great Falls, MT 59405
Phone: (406) 453-1461

Fax: (406) 761-4632
e-mail: mtsynod@montanasynod.org
www.montanasynod.org

EXHIBIT 22
DATE 3/25/09
SB 236

Rev. Jessica Crist
Bishop



Rev. David Peters
*Associate to the
Bishop*



Susan A. Hedahl
*Executive Assistant
for Administration*



Susan Smith
*Executive Assistant for
Program*



Tammy Bull, AIM
*Youth & Family
Ministry Coordinator*



Sue Thompson, AIM
*Minister for Congregational
Leadership Development*



Our Mission:

*Marked by the cross of
Christ forever, abundantly
blessed, we faithfully serve
God and neighbor.*

Our Vision:

*"Every person a witness,
Every minister equipping
witness, Every congregation
and Ministry, empowered
for witness serving
faithfully"*

January 21, 2009

Greetings to the Montana State Legislature!

I am writing to you as the Bishop of the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. With our 140 congregations across the state of Montana, our 5 nursing homes and social ministry agencies we represent 50,000 Montanans, and touch more.

I am writing to encourage you to vote to abolish Montana's death penalty. Our church, along with many other churches and religious organizations, is opposed to the death penalty as unjust, unfair, ineffective and immoral. Our church adopted a social statement on the death penalty in 1991, and works with others to help abolish capital punishment.

We do not condone violent crime. Nor do we condone violence as a response to violence. There is a fine line between retribution and vengeance. Executions do not restore broken society.

We believe that the public has a right to be protected from violence. And we believe strongly in prevention, in addressing some of the issues that lead to crime—such as poverty, substance abuse, child abuse and neglect.

Montana has been a leader in many arenas over the years. Let us take the lead now and abolish capital punishment in our state. Capital punishment (like slavery) has a long history, and is still practiced in such places as Iran, Pakistan and China. I encourage to you vote to abolish the death penalty in Montana. And I join the rest of the members of the Montana Association of Churches in thanking you for your service in the Legislature on behalf of all Montanans.

Sincerely,

Bishop Jessica Crist